

SOCIAL WORK, M.S.W. AND APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS, M.S. DUAL DEGREE

Want to be both a licensed social worker and a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst®?

Saint Louis University's dual degree in applied behavior analysis (M.S.) and social work (M.S.W.) is designed for you if you want integrated training in behavior science and professional social work practice.

Through this dual degree, you earn a Master of Social Work from SLU's CSWE-accredited program alongside a Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis. The ABA curriculum follows the course sequence and fieldwork standards established by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB®), preparing you to meet eligibility requirements for the BCBA® certification exam. Together, the dual degree provides the coursework and supervised practica needed to sit for both the social work licensure exam and the BCBA® exam.

The program intentionally integrates applied behavior analysis and social work coursework and practica. Although the M.S.W. requires 48 credits and the M.S. in applied behavior analysis requires 36 credits, shared coursework allows you to complete both degrees in as few as 62-65 total credit hours.

Why Combine ABA and Social Work?

ABA focuses on how and why behavior happens and how to change it using data, assessment and evidence-based interventions.

Social work focuses on people in context — families, communities, systems, policy and social justice.

By combining both, you graduate with:

- Skills in behavior assessment and intervention
- Strong grounding in systems, equity and social context
- Training to work across individual, family, organizational and community levels

Very few programs in the U.S. integrate applied behavior analysis and social work. Graduates stand out because they can address both behavior change and the systems that shape people's lives.

Two degrees, one coordinated program

You earn both a Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis and a CSWE-accredited Master of Social Work with a clinical concentration through a single, integrated program.

Eligibility for both credentials

You complete the coursework and supervised practice needed to sit for both:

- the BCBA® certification exam
- the social work licensure exam

Choose your learning format

You may complete the full dual degree in either an online or in-person format, allowing you to select the option that best fits your schedule and learning preferences.

Integrated coursework and practicum

Your coursework and field placements are designed to meet requirements for both behavior analysis certification and social work licensure, so you do not need to piece together training across separate programs.

If you want deep training in behavior science and strong preparation for clinical social work, this dual degree gives you both.

For additional information, see the catalog entries for the following programs:

Applied Behavior Analysis, M.S. (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/social-work/applied-behavior-analysis-ms/>)

Social Work, M.S.W. (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/social-work/social-work-msw/>)

Financial Aid

We are committed to helping you make your graduate education both affordable and meaningful. As an incoming student, you may be eligible for several forms of financial support, including scholarships, fellowships and graduate assistantships, as well as additional funding opportunities available during your program.

FAFSA and Other Resources

All incoming students should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (<https://studentaid.gov/>) application. A step-by-step guide to submitting your FAFSA is available online (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/apply-accept/>). Saint Louis University Student Financial Services provides a Graduate Financial Aid Handbook (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/-pdf/24y-grad-financing-guide.pdf>) that outlines the process of financing your graduate education.

The following links to resources in Saint Louis University Student Financial Services may also be helpful:

- Graduate loan options (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/types-of-aid/student-loan-information/>)
- Confirming your award (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/apply-accept/accept.php>)
- Paying your bill and payment plans (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/paying-your-bill/>)

Scholarships

All new incoming students will receive a partial scholarship upon admittance, thanks to our generous alumni and benefactors. Scholarship awards vary and are awarded upon admission. No separate application process is required.

Fellowships

In addition to scholarships, the School of Social Work offers competitive graduate fellowships that provide financial support and/or scholarships along with professional experience to graduate students. Unlike scholarships, all fellowships include a work or research requirement, which varies by fellowship type. Graduate Fellows contribute to the School's teaching, research and administrative activities while furthering their professional development. Find more information on the School of Social Work website (<https://www.slu.edu/social-work/admission.php>).

Newly accepted master's or doctoral students and students in the first year of a program may also be eligible to apply for University-wide diversity, dissertation or presidential fellowships. Find more details on fellowship applications here.

Graduate Assistantships and Internships

Graduate assistantships (GA) are University-funded assistantships awarded by the School of Social Work. They are assigned and funded for two semesters (a duration of 10 months, 20 hours per week), working with designated faculty. Benefits include an option for health insurance coverage (12 months), a stipend and two semesters (fall and spring) of tuition remission.

Under faculty mentors, GAs provide assistance with research/scholarship, teaching, community engagement and other professional, SSW or programmatic activities and are required to attend the University's Graduate Assistants' orientation the week before fall classes.

For more information about graduate assistantships, fellowships, scholarships and financial aid, please visit #SLU's Graduate Scholarships, Fellowships, Assistantships and Awards website.

Other Funding for Current Students

Current students may be eligible for conference/training funding. Opportunities and eligibility requirements vary and are communicated throughout the year by the programs.

Fieldwork Opportunities

SLU's dual-degree program in social work and applied behavior analysis provides a fully integrated, practice-focused education that prepares you to become an ethical, research-informed practitioner across behavioral health, education and social service settings.

As a dual-degree student pursuing BCBA® certification, you complete **1,500 hours of supervised fieldwork** across five semesters. These hours are carefully structured to meet:

- The supervised fieldwork requirements for **BCBA® certification**, and
- The field education requirements established by the **Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)** for the M.S.W. degree.

Rather than completing two entirely separate sets of placements, your supervised fieldwork is designed to satisfy both professional standards through coordinated training experiences, while maintaining the distinct supervision and competency expectations required by each discipline.

You receive:

- Supervision from a **Board-Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®)** for behavior-analytic competencies
- Supervision from a qualified **M.S.W. field instructor** to support social work competencies, professional identity and licensure preparation

This integrated structure allows you to develop advanced clinical, behavioral, and systems-level skills in real-world settings while progressing efficiently through both degrees.

Developmental Training Model

Across the five semesters of fieldwork, you:

- Master foundational and advanced behavior-analytic competencies
- Develop strong clinical assessment and intervention skills

- Strengthen research and data-based decision-making abilities
- Apply behavioral science within a social justice and systems-oriented framework

The diversity of practicum settings equips you to practice confidently and independently in schools, community mental health agencies, health care systems, nonprofit organizations, and other service environments.

ABA Capstone: Applied Research Project

The ABA program culminates in an applied capstone project in which you:

- Identify a meaningful practice problem
- Design and implement a behavior-analytic intervention or evaluation
- Collect and analyze original data
- Interpret findings and discuss implications for ethical and effective practice

The capstone reinforces your preparation as a scientist-practitioner and strengthens your ability to use data to improve outcomes across behavioral health and social service systems.

Accreditation

The social work bachelor's and master's programs are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
1701 Duke Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314-3457
Phone: 703-683-8080

Saint Louis University offers behavior-analytic coursework that is designed to meet the Pathway 2 behavior-analytic coursework eligibility requirements for BCBA® certification.

Learning Outcomes

Applied Behavior Analysis, M.S.

1. Conceptual Synthesis & Interpretation of Behavior-Analytic Principles

Integrate and interpret foundational concepts and principles to support accurate, function-based analysis of behavior.

2. Researcher-Practitioner Decision Making

Apply single-case experimental design and data-based reasoning to evaluate behavior-analytic research and clinical decision-making in practice contexts.

3. Design Behavior Analytic Interventions

Assess, design and evaluate behavior-analytic interventions that target meaningful, socially significant behavior change across diverse settings and populations.

4. Demonstrate Ethical & Professional Conduct

Apply ethical and professional standards consistent with the Behavior Analyst Certification Board's Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts to evaluate and guide behavior-analytic practice and research.

5. Deliver Culturally Responsive Behavior Analytic Practices Apply culturally responsive and contextually sensitive behavior-analytic practices that honor client identities, promote equity, and enhance social validity.

6. Collaboration with Stakeholders Integrate stakeholder perspectives into behavior-analytic planning and evaluation to support ethical, feasible, and socially meaningful outcomes.

Social Work, M.S.W.

1. Graduates will be able to demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
2. Graduates will be able to advance human rights and social, racial, economic and environmental justice.
3. Graduates will be able to engage antiracism, diversity, equity and inclusion (ADEI) in practice.
4. Graduates will be able to engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.
5. Graduates will be able to engage in policy practice.
6. Graduates will be able to engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
7. Graduates will be able to assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
8. Graduates will be able to intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
9. Graduates will be able to evaluate their practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Requirements

Admission Requirements

To be accepted into the dual degree program, you must apply to both the MSW and the MS ABA programs separately and meet the requirements of both programs. There are several overlapping requirements currently including an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher and a statement of interest. For additional information, view:

Applied Behavior Analysis, M.S. Admission Requirements (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/social-work/applied-behavior-analysis-ms/#requirementstext>)

Social Work, M.S.W. Admission Requirements (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/social-work/social-work-msw/#requirementstext>).

Fall Admissions

- February 1- Priority deadline for any student wishing to be considered for merit-based scholarships, graduate assistantships and fellowship opportunities.
- June 1- Final deadline for any international candidates wishing to begin their coursework in the fall of that year
- August 1- Final deadline for any domestic student wishing to begin their coursework in the fall of that year

Program Requirements

The dual degree program integrates the Master of Social Work and the Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis into a coordinated course of study. Rather than completing each degree separately, you follow an integrated curriculum designed to meet the requirements for both degrees and their associated certification and licensure pathways.

Individually, the Master of Social Work requires 48 credit hours and the Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis requires 36 credit hours. However, up to 20 credit hours of coursework are shared across both programs and count toward the requirements of each degree. As a result, you complete the dual degree program in a minimum of 62-65 total credit hours. Shared coursework is below.

Program Requirement	Program Requirement
Applied Behavior Analysis, M.S.	Master of Social Work
ABA 5826	SWRK 5821
ABA 5827	SWRK 5842 or SWRK 5822
ABA 5116	SWRK 5843 or SWRK 5823
ABA 5774	SWRK 5708
ABA 5747	MSW Elective
ABA 5775	MSW Elective
ABA 5115	MSW Elective
ABA 5749	SWRK 5700

Continuation Standards

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 in all graduate/professional courses. Any course with a letter grade B- or below or a U will have to be retaken.

Roadmap

This roadmap is just one example of a semester-by-semester plan of study for this program. There are other plans students can and do take. The plan of study for each particular student is established in consultation with each student's academic advisor; *this roadmap does not replace academic advising appointments.*

Roadmap notes:

- This Roadmap assumes full-time enrollment unless otherwise noted.
- Courses/Milestones marked with an "!" are critical and must be completed in the semester listed in the Roadmap to ensure a timely graduation.
- Course availability and sequencing are subject to change.

Clinical Track (Full-time)

Students must earn a B/S or better in all practica, generalist and ABA courses to pass the courses and matriculate. Students must earn a grade of C or better in all other courses.

Note: This roadmap reflects a fall start. Students beginning the dual degree in the spring will follow a modified plan of study based on course sequencing and availability. Students plan practica with their field liaison and may modify based on advising.

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
Fall		
ABA 5746	Principles & Concepts in Behavior Analysis	3
ABA 5774	Research Methods for Everyday Practice	3
SWRK 5750	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, & Groups	3
Credits		9
Spring		
ABA 5747	Behavioral Assessment	3
SWRK 5725	Human Behavior & the Social Environment	3
SWRK 5819	Generalist Integrative Practice Seminar	1
SWRK 5821	MSW/ABA Generalist Practicum	2
Credits		9
Summer		
SWRK 5702	Social Policy	3
SWRK 5751	Social Work Practice with Communities & Organizations	3
SWRK 5820	Specialization Integrative Seminar	1
SWRK 5822	Applied Behavior Analysis Practicum I	2
Credits		9
Year Two		
Fall		
ABA 5830	ABA Integrative Seminar II	1
SWRK 5707	Policy Practice for Social Justice	3
SWRK 5762	Diagnosis & Assessment in Clinical Practice	3
SWRK 5823	Applied Behavior Analysis Practicum II	2
Credits		9
Spring		
ABA 5001	Supervision and Organizational Behavior Management	3
ABA 5115	Advanced Clinical Research Capstone	3
ABA 5116	Practicum IV	1
ABA 5748	Behavior Change and Process	3
Credits		10
Summer		
ABA 5749	Ethics in Behavior Analysis	3
ABA 5775	Basic Behavior Analysis	3
ABA 5118	Practicum V	1
Credits		7
Year Three		
Fall		
ABA 5002	Philosophy of Behavioral Science	3
SWRK 5733	Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals	3
SWRK 5736	Advanced Clinical Practice with Families and Groups	3
Credits		9
Total Credits		62

Research Track (On-campus only, Full-time)

Students must earn a B/S or better in all practica, generalist and ABA courses to pass the courses and matriculate. Students must earn a grade of C or better in all other courses.

Note: This roadmap reflects a fall start. Students beginning the dual degree in the spring will follow a modified plan of study based on course sequencing and availability. Students plan practica with their field liaison and may modify based on advising.

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
Fall		
ABA 5746	Principles & Concepts in Behavior Analysis	3
ABA 5774	Research Methods for Everyday Practice	3
SWRK 5750	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, & Groups	3
Credits		9
Spring		
ABA 5747	Behavioral Assessment	3
SWRK 5725	Human Behavior & the Social Environment	3
SWRK 5819	Generalist Integrative Practice Seminar	1
SWRK 5821	MSW/ABA Generalist Practicum	2
Credits		9
Summer		
SWRK 5702	Social Policy	3
SWRK 5751	Social Work Practice with Communities & Organizations	3
SWRK 5820	Specialization Integrative Seminar	1
SWRK 5822	Applied Behavior Analysis Practicum I	2
Credits		9
Year Two		
Fall		
ABA 5830	ABA Integrative Seminar II	1
SWRK 5707	Policy Practice for Social Justice	3
SWRK 5762	Diagnosis & Assessment in Clinical Practice	3
SWRK 5823	Applied Behavior Analysis Practicum II	2
Credits		9
Spring		
ABA 5001	Supervision and Organizational Behavior Management	3
ABA 5116	Practicum IV	1
ABA 5748	Behavior Change and Process	3
ABA 5990	Thesis Research ¹	3
Credits		10
Summer		
ABA 5118	Practicum V	1
ABA 5749	Ethics in Behavior Analysis	3
ABA 5775	Basic Behavior Analysis	3
ABA 5990	Thesis Research ¹	0
Credits		7

Year Three

Fall

ABA 5002	Philosophy of Behavioral Science	3
ABA 5990	Thesis Research ¹	3
SWRK 5733	Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals	3
SWRK 5736	Advanced Clinical Practice with Families and Groups	3
Credits		12
Total Credits		65

¹ Students must register for ABA 5990 in consecutive semesters for a total of six (6) credit hours.

Contact Us

Apply for Admission (<https://www.slu.edu/admission/>)

For admission questions, contact:

School of Social Work Graduate Admissions Office
 sswadmissions@slu.edu
 314-977-2752

For program questions, contact:

Social Work

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Applied Behavior Analysis

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